

THE SERIOUSNESS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN

I Peter 1:13

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** No long introduction this morning. I want to get directly to the point of the lesson: **Being a Christian is very serious business!**
2. Some Christians don't take it seriously (e.g., chili cook-off). As one preacher put it, "Christianity is not a patty-cake, patty-cake religion." (**I Pet. 1:13**: "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.>").
3. **3** I want to give you a four reasons why being a Christian is so very serious.

II. DISCUSSION:

1. **4** Because of the greatness of the God we worship and serve:
 - A. He is our Creator (Gen. 1:1; **Jn. 1:1-3**: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.").
 - B. His great power (**Heb. 11:3**: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."; **Psa. 33:6**: "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."; **Psa. 19:1**: "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."; **Neh. 9:32**: "Now therefore, our God, The great, the mighty, and awesome God."; Apollo, Manhattan Projects, Eph. 3:20).
 - C. His great power should make us humble! **Job 42:3-6**: "You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' 5 'I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.'"
 - D. The universe's most profound fact: God died for our sins! Matt. 1:23; Jn. 1:1-3; **Rom. 5:8**: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
2. **5** Because of what God has done for us:
 - A. We are the pinnacle of His creation (Gen. 1:26-27; **Psa. 8:1-9**).
 - B. Gives us all physical blessings (Matt. 6:25-33; **Jas. 1:17**: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.>").
 - C. He has spoken to us (**Heb. 1:1-2**: "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;"):
 - (1) We can know God exists by His creation (Rom. 1:20).
 - (2) But, we cannot know His will for us without His revelation (1 Cor. 2:9-13; Eph. 3:1-5).
 - D. He provides us with all spiritual blessings "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3):
 - ☛ He died for our sins (**Rom. 5:6-8**: "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."; Jn. 1:1-3).
 - ☛ He has forgiven our sins (Rom. 6:23; **Heb. 1:3**: "who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"; **Col. 1:19-22**).

- ☛ He has given us a great calling (**Heb. 3:1**: “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.”; **2 Pet. 1:3-4**: “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”; **1 Jn. 1:3**).
- ☛ He provides us with great help (**1 Cor. 10:13**; **Heb. 4:15-16**: “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”).

E. Let us sing His praises! **Psa. 9:2**: “I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” (“praise”: 152 times in Psalms).

3. **6** Because our God has given us great responsibilities:

- A. Righteous living (**Acts 17:30**: “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.”; **1 Pet. 1:15**: “but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”; **Col. 3:1-10**; **Lk. 9:23**; **Matt. 5:6**).
- B. Relationships with others (**Col. 3:12-15**; **Phil. 2:1-4**).
 - (1) Family (husbands: **Eph. 5:25**; **Eph. 6:4**: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”; **1 Tim. 5:8**; wives: **Eph. 5:22**: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”; **Titus 2:4-5**: “that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”; children: **Eph. 6:1-3**: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: 3 ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”).
 - (2) Neighbor (**Mk. 12:31**: “And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”; **Lk. 10:30-37**: opportunity & means).
 - (3) Brethren (**1 Pet. 1:22**: “Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.”; **Jas. 5:19-20**: “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”; **Gal. 6:1-2**: “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”; **1 Jn. 3:16-19**; **Jas. 2:14-17**; **Matt. 25:31-46**).
- C. Worship (**Jn. 4:24**; **Rev. 4:2-11**; **Heb. 10:25**: “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”).
- D. Preaching the gospel (**Matt. 28:19-20**: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”; **1 Tim. 2:4**; **1 Cor. 3:9**).

4. **7** Because of what is at stake:

- A. Most valuable possession (**Matt. 16:26**: “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”)(lottery winners often end up as losers!).
- B. Personal judgment (**Heb. 9:27**: “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”; **2 Cor. 5:10-11**: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing,

therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;"; **Rom. 14:10-12:** "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: 'As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.' 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God."; **Rev. 20:11-15**).

- C. Eternal life vs. eternal destruction (**Matt. 25:31-46**; **2 Thess. 1:7-9:** "...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,"; **Mk. 9:43ff**).

III. CONCLUSION: 8

1. Being a Christian is serious! How about you? **Heb. 10:19-31**
 - A. Do you have "boldness to enter the Holiest"?
 - B. Are you drawing "near with a true heart and in full assurance of faith"?
 - C. Are you meeting your responsibilities to God, your family, your brethren, and yourself?
2. Are you contemplating the Day of Judgment:
 - A. We will be judged by "the things done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10).
 - B. Suppose you choose to continue to "sin willfully" by continuing to "forsake the assembling of ourselves together" (Heb. 10:25-26).
 - C. You are now among the lost, among those whose name is "not found written in the Book of Life", among those who are on their way to be "cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15).
 - D. As you file down that terrible, blazing lakeshore with the multitude you meet Ted Bundy (murdered perhaps over 300 women!) and he asks you why you're lost.
 - E. You answer, "I...
 - ☛ "trampled the Son of God underfoot,"
 - ☛ "counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing,"
 - ☛ "and insulted the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29).
 - F. Then he says, "Wow, I thought I did some really bad things! You must have done things much worse than I!"
 - G. And your answer will simply be, "I didn't take being a Christian as seriously as I should have."
3. If you're here this morning and not living as you should you need to:
 - A. Fear! **Heb. 10:30-31:** "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, 'The LORD will judge His people.' 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
 - B. Remember how far you've come! vv. 32-34
 - C. Remember there's only a little way to go! **Heb. 10:35-39**

Time Enough Yet (Tillit S. Teddlie)

*“O soul of mine, be not alarmed At what the Lord may say,
Some future time, when I am old, I’ll chose the heavenly way.*

*I’m strong enough, I need no help, It’s pleasure that I crave,
When I have drunk life’s sparkling cup, I’ll call on Christ to save.*

*The Holy Spirit’s tender voice entreats me night and day,
And ere I go in sin too far I’ll turn and Him obey.*

Chorus verses 1-3:

*Time, time, time enough yet, O soul why be alarmed?
The heavenly way I’ll choose someday, but there’s time, time enough yet!*

Verse 4:

*Today, O friend, may be the last, Stop now and count the cost,
You stand condemned before the throne, Your soul forever lost.*

Chorus to verse 4:

*Lost! Lost! O what a cry from souls along the shore;
In darkness to go, in sorrow and woe, and be lost, lost evermore!*